(b) whether any study has been conducted to ascertain the requirement of minimum land holding for the purposes of viability of agricultural operations;

(c) if so, the details in this regard;

(d) whether Government are contemplating to withhold too much fragmentation of agricultural land; and

(e) what is the average area held by a farmer in the country? THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Economic viability of land holdings depend on whether the same is under multiple cropping, high-valued crops, technology is appropriate and prices are remunerative. Some research studies conducted by various Agro-Economic Research Centres show the fallout of decrease in size of holdings are rise in small and marginal holdings, narrow base of production activities and underemployment.

(d) Consolidation of fragmented agricultural land holdings forms an integral part of the Land Reform Policy. However, the role of the Central Government is only of an advisory and coordinating nature as the subject of land reforms falls within the administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments. Accordingly, State Governments have been requested from time to time for taking up consolidation of holdings and take steps to prevent fragmentation of land holdings.

(e) As per 'Agricultural Census 2000-01', the average size of land holding in the country is 1.32 hectares.

Subsidy and loans for deep-sea fishery sector

2635. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any move is there to extend soft loans to entrepreneurs buying expensive tuna boats and factory vessels;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a demand from industry for interest subsidy venture capital and seed capital to acquire expensive boats;

(c) whether there is no subsidy or incentive extended at all for the deep-sea fishery sector;

(d) what are the reasons for less than adequate interest in the development of deep-sea fisheries in the recent past; and

(e) the steps proposed to extend fiscal procedural facilitation and all other needs to encourage deep-sea facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) In order to encourage conversion of Deep Sea Trawlers into Tuna Long Liners, cash subsidy is provided.

(d) and (e) Adequate interest has been shown by the Union Government for development of deep-sea fisheries in the recent past as evidenced by (i) announcing

a Comprehensive Marine Fishing Policy, (ii) setting up of an Inter Ministerial Empowered Committee for looking into development of Deep Sea Fishing Sector, (iii) notifying guidelines for operation of Indian flag deep-sea fishing vessels and Joint Venture vessels in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India.

To facilitate and encourage deep-sea fishing the government has embarked upon the following measures:

(i) Allowing Indian entrepreneurs to acquire purpose-built tuna fishing vessels through import.

(ii) To encourage conversion of deep-sea trawlers into tuna long liners by providing cash subsidy.

(iii) To encourage small and medium trawlers of less than 20m length into tuna long lining through grant of registration to fish in the EEZ.

(iv) To permit import of resource specific vessels through deferred payment system.

(v) To permit up to 75% foreign crew initially on board tuna vessels so that lack of trained crew is not a hindrance in undertaking deep-sea fishing operations.

(vi) To gear up training of operatives in tuna fishing by augmenting the facilities available with the fishery institutions.

(vii) To construct modern fishery harbours and also to improve the facilities at the existing ones to meet the special requirement of the tuna industry.

(viii) To encourage joint venture in tuna fishing sector.

Deep-sea fishery

2636. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government subsidise the construction of fishery harbours and its maintenance after that;

(b) whether many such fishery harbours have been built in the last 10 years and their State-wise location;

(c) to what extent there has been a neglect of the deep-sea fisheries sector in the last 10 years and neglect of building infrastructure for encouraging deep-sea fisheries;

(d) the special facilities being given for fishery vessels dedicated to specialized fishery like tuna, sardines and non-shrimp varieties; and

(e) the funds earmarked for this purpose to help the industry to develop deep-sea fisheries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Union Government through the Centrally Sponsored